

A
Sad Prognostick
OF
Approaching JUDGMENT;
O R,
THE HAPPY MISERY
O F
GOOD MEN IN BAD TIMES.
Set forth in a Sermon Preached at
S^t Gregories, June the 13th 1658.

By Nathaniell Hardy, Minister of
S^t Dyonis Back church.

P S A L. 12. 1.
Help Lord, for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithfull
fail from among the children of men.

Philos. Jud. περί αποικίας.
Ευχαρίσται τὸν ὁς ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ, τὸν μὲν ὅς Ἰουδαίῳ, ἀνθρώπων δὲ ἐν
τοῖς γένεσι τῶν ἀνθρώπων; τὴν δὲ αὐτὴν διαμένειν ἐν τῷ τῶν νέων
ἀναστῆναι.

L O N D O N,
Printed by A. M. for Joseph Cranford at the Sign of
the Kings Head in S^t Pauls Church-yard, 1658.

2nd Proposick

Approaching JUDGMENT

GOOD WILL & BAD WILL

Printed by J. B. G. at the Sign of the Anchor in the Strand



To the
R E A D E R.

Have too often (and not without regret) beheld those monstrous births which have been forced into the world by the unskillfull and injurious Midwifry of Scriblers, Stationers, and Printers, often the death of their pretended Parents; Indeed, who would not be troubled to see the innocent Names of eminent Divines made (as it were) to do penance in the Printers Sheets, for the incontinency of their wanton Auditors, who between the Pen and the Press, beget and bring forth a Bastard brood of Sermons, which they must Father.

To the Reader.

How greatly that Reverend man of God Dr. John Hewit (since his suffering death) hath upon his account suffered from his seeming Friends, is obvious to every intelligent eye; witness two Books of Sermons Printed and published under his Name, and (notwithstanding some of them appear to be translations out of French Authours) pretended to be his; which was done too, both against a special Caveat entered in Stationers-Hall by his honourable Lady: and Advertisements in print by two of his worthy Friends, viz. Dr. Wild, and Mr. Barwick, whose Names have been made use of without their privity or consent; to stand in place and shew of Licensers of those Sermons, which they utterly disown, and desire by this means publickly to disclaim.

*This having been the Lot of so many Preachers of the Gospel, and those men famous in their Generation, I do not much wonder, and am the less troubled that it is mine; only I must needs resent (yet not without a readiness to forgive) the impudence of those, who have, as it were, ravished my Sermon before my face, dealing so injuriously by me whilst alive. By this I plainly foresee
what*

To the Reader,

what is to be expected when I am dead: The consideration whereof, hath been, and is one cause inducing me to appear so often in Print, that what is (I ingenuously confess) but very imperfect as the best, may not however come forth mangled hereafter.

I hope the Candid Reader will not think his patience abused, whilst I shall in a few words inform him how much I have been abused in this kind.

Some years ago came forth a little Manual of several Prayers, whereof that, to which my Name is affixed, is for the most part made up of such expressions, which (how good soever they may be in themselves) were not wont to be used by me, as appears by that Prayer, which (for this Reason) I prefixed before the first part of my Exposition upon St. Johns first Epistle.

I met this last Summer with a Book called The Herbal of Divinity, upon the Title page whereof (the Authours Name being concealed) my Name is affixed in great Letters, to a part of a sentence with which I began a Sermon preached at St. Gregories on Low Sunday last, upon that Text which is placed in the front of that Dis-

To the Reader.

course, namely the 26th of Isaia. and the 19th verse. For this cause (very probably) that the unwary Reader might believe it to be mine.

Within these few weeks, I have perused a Discourse in part mine, and but in part (as will appear by the ensuing Sermon) Printed and published without my knowledge. Indeed, I heard a flying Rumour, and received a namelesse Letter, threatening the publication of it, but I was not willing to believe any would be so audacious, till now I see it. It is true, my Name is not exprest; but it is said to be a Sermon Preached at that place, and on that day, and upon the Text, where, when, and on which I preached: And which proclaimeth the insolence of these Publishers, though they never had any conference with me, either before or since my preaching, yet they presume to know my thoughts, in that it is said to be Intended for the solemnization of Doctor Hewits Funerall: whereas in truth, I was engaged to preach that turn at St. Gregories before the Doctors death; yea, when there was some hopes of his life. And though I deny not
but

To the Reader.

but that sad Providence intervening, occasioned me to pitch my thoughts on that subject; yet had I intended it for his Funerall, I justly could, and certainly should, have given a farre more ample Character of his worth.

If now the Reader shall desire to know what was my reall intent in Preaching this following Sermon at that time, the close of it will informe him, that it was no other then what ought to be one end of all Preaching, namely, to bring the People to Repentance. And observing a generall sadness of Compassion upon their spirits, I was willing so to frame my Discourse, that through Gods Grace, a sorrow of Compunction might accompany it.

*What was then Preached, and hath been hitherto withheld from the Presse (partly out of a mean Opinion of the Work it self, and partly out of a just desire not to exasperate) I am now necessitated to publish for my own Vindication, and that what was the Preachers aim may be effected upon
all*

To the Reader

all who then heard, or shall now read it, and
and shall be his earnest and successful request
at the Throne of Grace. Amen.

NATHAN HARDY.

Errata. Page 31. line 5. for confidence read conscience.

THE



THE
Sad PROGNOSTICK
OF
Approaching JUDGMENT.

ISAIAH 57th Chapt. Verse the first.

*The righteous perisheth, and no man
layeth it to heart, and mercifull
men are taken away, none conside-
ring that the righteous is taken a-
way from the evil to come.*



Our Prophet *Isaiah* in his two and twen-
tieth Chapter, tels us of a day where-
in the Lord God of Hosts calls to weep-
ing and mourning, and though (since
every day is a day of sinning) every
day ought to be a day of mourning: yet there are

Isa. 22. 12.

four special daies wherein God expects this duty from us:

The day of any *hainous wickednesse* committed by our selves or others.

The day of any *grievous judgment*, either *national* or *personal* inflicted.

The day wherein the *wicked prosper*, and the *ungodly triumph*. And

The day wherein any of *Gods faithful* and *eminent servants* are *snatcht away* and *cut off by death*.

It is not *many daies* (*Beloved*) since there was *such a day*, and of *such a day* it is my *Text* speaks; the want of a due and serious *consideration* whereof, moved our *Prophet* to take up this bitter lamentation, *The righteous perisheth and no man layeth it to heart*, &c.

This sad and sorrowfull *complaint* looks two waies, to the *Godly*, and to the *Wicked*; bewailing the *miserie* of the one, and bemoaning the *iniquity* of the other, that the *persons* of the *godly* were *destroyed*, and the *hearts* of the *wicked* *hardened*. That ariseth from *grief*, this from *grief* mixed with *anger*; both very *vehement*, as appeareth by the *multiplication* of several *clauses* to the *same sense*. God grant that I in *handling*, and you in *hearing*, may have the same holy *passions* which our *Prophet* had in *uttering* this dolefull dicty, *The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart*, &c.

Gen. 1.

Begin we with the *complaint* concerning the *Godly*, which we find to be both *amplified* and *mitigated*. Amplified in two *Clauses*, *The righteous perisheth*, *The mercifull men are taken away*: Mitigated

gated in one, they are taken away from the evil to come.

In the *inlarging* of the *complaint*, we shall consider the *Godly mans disposition and condition*. That really very good, this seemingly very bad; both characterized in two words: His *disposition*; in those two, *righteous* and *mercifull*; his *condition* in those two, *perisheth* and *taken away*: Of each a word.

1. The first thing we are to take notice of, is the *Godly mans disposition*. And that.

1. As described in the word *righteous*, a word which being in the *Hebrew* in the *singular number*, and having an *Article prefixt*, is by some *Expositours* peculiarly applied to *Christ*, as if this verse were a *Prophecie* of his *death*: Indeed, to him especially and primarily doth this title of *righteous* belong. There is none *righteous*, no not one, (saith the *Psalmist*): Except one, (saith the *Father*;) meaning *Christ*, who is perfectly and originally *righteous*: in which

respect the Prophet *Malachy* calls him the *Sunne of righteousness*. Righteousness in us, like *light* in the *Moon*; hath its *spots* and *imperfections*: We at best, are but *Starres* of *righteousness*, which shine with a *borrowed light*: *Christ*, like the *Sunne*, hath in himself a *fulness of grace*, of which we receive *grate for grate*. Of this *righteous person* it is true, that he *perished* in the *opinion*, and was *taken away* by the *rage* of his *enemies*: Nay, which too truly answereth the text, he died *unlamented* by the *generality* of the *people*; So that he might well have uttered upon the *Cross* those words of the *Church*, *Is it nothing to you all that pass by?* Behold,

Lam. 1. 12.

and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.

But when I observe the other Character to be in the Plurall number, *mercifull men*, I rather incline to understand this word though in the Singular, as *nomen collectivum*, refering not to one, but many, and accordingly those Prophets and Messengers of the Lord, together with the other of his faithfull servants which were slain in the dayes of Manasseh, who shed innocent blood until he had filled Jerusalem with blood from one end to the other, are conceived by Expositors to be those whom the Prophet here be-moaneth.

2 King. 21. 16.

Lap.
Sanct. } in loc.
Musc.

If it shall be now enquired in what notion this term *righteous* was attributed to them, and may be affirmed of every godly man? I answer, they are *righteous* in a three-fold sense, Really, Interpretatively, Comparatively.

I. Every godly man is really righteous, inasmuch as

Jer. 23. 6.

Isa. 61. 10.

1 Cor. 1. 30.

1. His person is justified through our Lord Jesus Christ, who is therefore called by the Prophet Jeremy, the Lord our righteousness, and is said by the Prophet Isaiah, to cover us with the robe of righteousness, and by St. Paul, to be made of God unto us righteousness. Thus as all men are sinners in the first, so are all believers righteous in the second Adam. This is that righteousness which is purely Evangelicall, and is called the righteousness of faith, because the righteousness of Christ apprehended by faith: Hence it comes to pass that as the Father elegantly, *Quod lex operum monendo imperat, lex fidei*

Ambros.

fidei credendo impetrat, that righteousness which the Law requireth, faith obtains.

2. His nature is renewed after the Image of God, which St. Paul tells us consists in *righteousness* and *true holiness*: in this respect it is that *believers* are said to *partake of the* (or rather a) *divine nature* by the Apostle Peter, and to be *born of God* by the Apostle John, because after a sort they are *righteous as God is righteous*: well may the name *righteous* be given, where the *new divine nature* is conferred, which maketh us of *unholy, holy, of vicious, virtuous, of unjust, righteous*. Eph. 4.24. 2 Pet. 1.4. 1 Joh. 5.1.

3. His life is reformed, and in some measure ordered according to the rule of *righteousness*, the Word of God. He that doth *righteousness* saith Saint John, is *righteous*; every good man doth *righteousness*, though not exactly, yet sincerely; his aim and endeavour is to give God and man their due, *tribute to whom tribute, custome to whom custome, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour* belongeth. 1 Joh. 3.7. Rom. 13.7.

2. Every godly man is *righteous* interpretatively, inasmuch as being justified by Christ, and sanctified by the Spirit, God doth account, accept of him as *righteous*. The same word in the Hebrew signifieth upright and perfect; to teach us that upright persons are (for Christs sake) *accepted of God*, as if they were perfect. Well might the Prophet, well may we call them *righteous*, whom God calls so; and we find upon record, Noah, Job, with others, Gen. 6.9. Job 1. 1. to be commended by God himself as *righteous*.

3. Every

3. Every godly man is *righteous comparatively*, in respect of the *wicked* among whom he *lives*: thus these of whom our *Prophet* here speaketh, being compared with those *voluptuous Epicures* mentioned in the *end* of the former Chapter, might well be stiled *righteous*. Look how the *Saints* are said to be *worthy*; so they may be said to be *righteous*, *Quantum ad comparationem ceterorum*, to wit in comparison of others. Indeed on the one hand the most *holy* man compared with *God* and *Christ* is *unjust* and *impure*, and therefore it is when the *Saints* have look't upon *God*, they *abhor themselves*. But on the other hand compared with the *wicked*, they are justly esteemed *righteous*: when the *actions* of the good and the bad are set together, the *prayers*, *tears*, *fasts*, and *alms* of the one, by the *oaths*, *jollities*, *curfings*, and *oppressions* of the other, they become so much the more *conspicuous*; and as although *silver* be far below *gold*, yet it is very *precious* in comparison of *lead* and *iron*; so the *servants* of *God*, though infinitely short of his *purity* and *righteousness*, are *righteous* if compared with the *ungodly* and *profane*.

1. Having discovered to you the first Character of *righteous*, proceed we to a view of the second, which is *merciful*. According to the Hebrew, it may be read *men of mercy* and *good will*, and so construed either *passively* or *actively*.

1. In a *passive* sense, *men of mercy* and *good will*, are those upon whom *God* will have *mercy*, and to whom he beareth a *singular good will*, The Lord is good unto all, and his tender mercies are over all his works (saith the *Psalmist*) there being no creature so
Every
man

Isa. 56. ult.

Ambros. in Apocal.

Psalm. 145. 9.

mean and base, which giveth not a specimen of his goodness, but yet his delights are with the sonnes of men, and his love to mankind, is greater then to any of his creatures: upon which account the Psalmist saith a little before, Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him, or the sonne of man that thou makest account of him? And as God hath a more special love to man then any other creatures, so he hath a more peculiar love to the righteous then any other men; in which respect the Psalmist saith elsewhere, Thou Lord wilt bleſſe the righteous, with favour wilt thou compaſſe him as with a Shield. Pſal. 144. 3.

In this construction, there is very good use to be made of the word in this Scripture.

1. Partly to inform us, that they who perish in this world, may yet be Gods favourites. Men are apt to think that God should not let the wind blow upon his darlings, but they are deceived; his love is not a Motherly and cockering, but a Fatherly and prudent love. Benjamin was not the lesse regarded by Joseph, because the Cup was found in his sack: We must not infer from the presence of outward afflictions, the absence of divine affection. When he who was the righteous one, of whom the Father said, This is my beloved Sonne in whom I am well pleased, was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs: Yea, upon the Cross, breathed forth that dolefull language, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? as being left by God, to the will of his enemies. Let us not doubt, but that righteous persons, though they perish by the malice of men, are yet in favour with God. Mar. 3. 17.

2. Partly

2. *Partly to comfort righteous ones in the midst of all their sufferings; considering that while the world frowns, God smiles. Though the cold wind of persecution blow, yet the Sun-beams of divine affection shines upon them: Though they are rejected as dross by men, yet they are accounted by God as his Jewels. What matters it for mens hatred, so we have Heavens love? This may make the righteous not only contented but cheerful in suffering the cruelty of their enemies, that they are the men whom God marks out for the objects of his mercy.*

2. But though this construction be pious and congruous, yet I rather incline to the active notion of these words; so much the rather, because of that parallel place in the Prophet Micah, where it is said; *The good man is perished out of the earth.* In this sense, men of mercy, are such as exercise mercy towards them that are in misery.

Mercy in its general notion, is alienis miserijs condoleere, easque pro viribus sublevare; a tender condolence with others miseries, and a ready willingness to succour them according to our ability. Such is the activity of this grace, that it runs through the whole man.

In the understanding, it is a serious consideration how we may do good. *The liberal man* (saith the Prophet) *deviseth liberal things.* His thoughts are taken up with consulting for the relief of the distressed.

In the memory, it is a continual setting the miseries of our Brethren before us. *The merciful man forgetteth*

Mic. 7. 2.

Isa. 32. 8.

forgetteth the injuries that are done to himself, and remembers the miseries that are suffered by others; he still thinketh he heareth them groaning, and seeth them bleeding.

In the will, and affection, it is a sweet sympathy, whereby we do *nolle malum, velle bonum*, will the evil, and will the good of another. The mercifull mans heart aketh for his Brethren, and he resents their sufferings, as if they were his own.

Nor doth mercy only retire it self into the chambers of the soul, but looketh out at the windows, and goeth out of doors for the succour of the afflicted. It opens the eye to see and search out the miserable, which, beholding them; maketh report to the heart, and that being affected with sorrow, causeth the eye to drop down teares; it quickneth the ear to attend and listen to the cries of the calamitous, like the tender Nurse, which heareth the least whispering of the Child: It unlooseth the tongue to speak a word in season, pleading with God and man for them: It puts under the shoulder to bear a part of the burden, according to that Apostolical counsel, *Bear you one anothers burdens.* It unclaspeth the hand to relieve, and knocketh off the fetters from the feet: so that they are ready to go, nay runne in behalf of the miserable. In one word, the mercifull mans head is full of thoughts, his heart of sorrowes, his eyes of teares, mouth of Prayers, and hands of gifts. Gal. 6.2.

Thus every truly godly man is not only just, but good, righteous, but mercifull: He puts on viscera, bowels of mercy and tender compassions to-

wards them that are afflicted; he is ready to do *opera, works of mercy*, according to his power. By the one, he draws out his soul to the hungry; by the other, he reacheth forth his hand to the needy. Righteous men know that *almes* is the poor mans due, and *mercy* is a debt they owe to the miserable: no wonder if they are carefull to pay it.

And look how far the *misery* of the distressed reacheth, so far the *mercy* of the righteous extendeth; both to the souls and bodies of others. Namely, they are men of *mercy*, especially to the souls of others; instructing the ignorant, confirming the weak, counselling the doubtfull, warning the unruly, perswading the obstinate, and comforting the grieved. Nor are they unmindfull of the bodies of others, cloathing the naked, feeding the hungry, refreshing the thirsty, visiting the sick, and entertaining the stranger.

Nor is their *mercy* only confined to friends, but enlarged to foes: They are men of good will, even to those that bear them ill will: They do good, where they have received evil: They requite injuries with courtesies, and want not compassion for those who are the instruments of their passion.

Whilest then the Jesuited Saints wear the red Coat of blood and cruelty, let Gods holy ones be cloathed in the white of innocency and pitty, and whilest their zeal flames in fury, let our love shine in mercy. Whatever they pretend, they are no other then Sonnes of Belial, who delight in blood; who slay the Fatherless and the widowe, and make Persons, Families, nay Nations, miserable. He hath shewed thee, O man,
what

what is good, and what the Lord by God requireth of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? So we read in the Prophecy of Micah, Sow to your selves in righteousness, and reap in mercy, that is the Prophet Hosea his counsel. Mic. 6. 8. Hos. 10. 12. Christs blessed ones, are such as hunger after righteousness, and withall are mercifull. And here the Characters of a godly man are righteous and mercifull. Mat. 5. 7. I have done with the first branch, which is the Saints pious disposition, I now hasten to

2. His Calamitous condition, which is represented in those words, perisheth, and taken away.

The first word perisheth, which is of a large acceptation, may be capable of an harsh construction, and such as cannot be predicated of a righteous man, in which respect Eliphaz said to Job, Remember, I pray thee, Job 4. 7. who ever perished being innocent, or where were the righteous cut off? That ye may therefore rightly understand the meaning of the phrase, know, that there is a three-fold perishing.

The first belongs neither to the righteous, nor to the wicked; the second is proper only to the wicked, the third is common to the righteous, with the wicked.

1. Perishing in its most strict notion, is transitus ab esse ad non esse, a passage from being to not being; an utter extinction, a total annihilation. And in this sense only the beast perisheth, which dying, is resolved into its first principles, and at last into nothing. Though therefore the wicked man is said to be like the beast that perisheth, yet he doth not perish like the beast; Indeed, it were happy for him if he

Psal. 49. 20.

Mat. 26. 24.

might: For though some endeavour by their Metaphysical notions, to prove a miserable being, better then *no being*, yet they must give us leave to say with our Saviour, *It were good for that man he had never been born.* Nor is it to be doubted, but that the *dampned* heartily wish, not to be at all, but (alas) it cannot be.

Prov. 10. 7.

2. There is a *perishing*, which is peculiar to the wicked, and this is two fold; either *perishing* in his name, or *perishing* in his person.

1. Only wicked men *perish* in their names, whilest their memorial is cut off from the earth. Though the *righteous* die, yet their names live: That malice which takes away their life, cannot extinguish their memory; but the *wicked* *perish*, so as to be wholly forgotten, or remembered with infamy: so true is that of the wise man, *The memory of the just is blessed, but the name of the wicked shall rot.*

Joh. 4. 16.

2. Only wicked men *perish* in their persons, that is, *soul and body.* This is that *perishing*, which is opposed by our Saviour to eternal life; and is sometimes called the *second death.* In this sense, to *perish*, is to be eternally miserable; to be ever *perishing*, and yet never *perished.* And thus, *Who ever perished being righteous?* Indeed St Peter saith, the *righteous* are scarcely saved, but there is a great deal of difference between *scarcely*, and *almost*: Though he is *scarcely* saved, that is, not without great difficulty, yet he is saved by Gods mercy from *this perishing.*

1 Pet. 4. 17.

3. But lastly, There is a *perishing* which is common

to the *righteous* and the *wicked*, and thus the *righteous* as well as the *wicked* perish, by the *miseries* of *life*, and at length by *death*.

1. They *perish* by the *miseries* of this *life*, in which sense, *perishing* is opposed to *prospering*: *Good men* are exposed to *dangers* in this world, as well as the *bad*; nay, more than the *bad*. That chosen vessel *St Paul*, reckons a *multitude* of *dangers* which befell him in this life, where he tells us, that he was in *perills* of *waters*, in *perills* of *robbers*, in *perills* of his own *Country-men*, in *perills* by the *Heathen*, in *perills* in the *City*, in *perills* in the *Wilderness*, in *perills* in the *Sea*, in *perills* among false *Brethren*; and surely what befell him, is incident to the most *righteous* persons.

2 Cor. 11. 26.

2. They *perish* by *death*. In this sense the *Disciples* meant it; when they cried, *Master, we perish*. Thus *Elisha* expounds it, when he saith, *All flesh shall perish together, and men shall turn again unto dust*. And this our *Prophet* intends, when he saith, *the righteous perisheth*.

Luk. 7. 24.

Joh. 24. 15.

If you shall ask, why *dying*, which is only a *separation* of the *soul* from the *body*, not an *annihilation* of either, is called a *perishing*? I answer:

1. It is a *perishing*, though not *veritas*, yet *apparentia*; in *reality*, yet *appearance*; though not *secundum rei veritatem*, according to the *verity* of the *thing*, yet *secundum communem sensum*, according to the *opinion* of the *vulgar*. When any man *dyeth*, whether *good* or *bad*, he seemeth as one that were *perished*. And though (as our blessed *Saviour* telleth us) *all live to God*, yet as *Musculus* glosseth upon the

Joh. 11. 26.

Luk. 20. 38.

Musc. in loc.

text, *In mundi iudicio*, in the judgment of the world, they perish.

Job 14.10.
10.21.

2. It is a *perishing*, though not *absolute*, yet *relative*, *absolutely* yet *respectively*; it is a *perishing* as to this world. When any man *dieth*, as well *righteous* as *wicked*, he so *perisheth*, as that he shall never again *live* here: Upon which account it is said, *Man giveth up the Ghost, and where is he?* Yea, holy Job saith of himself, *I go whence I shall not return.* This is that which is expres't in that parallel Scripture to this, where the Prophet saith, *The good man is perished out of the earth.* He is not *perished*, so as not to be at all, yet he is *perished* so, as to be no more upon earth. And this is all that the Prophet meanes, when he saith, the *righteous perisheth*.

Mic. 2. 2.

2. This will yet further appear, if you look upon the other word, where it is said, That *mercifull men are taken away.* As the providence of God in nature, hath made those members double, which are most usefull, as the eyes, ears, hands, and feet, that if one fail, the other may supply: so the wisdom of God in Scripture, hath coupled Phrases together, that if the one be *obscure*, the other may *explain*: If the one be *harsh*, the other may *soften* it. It is so here, whereas that phrase of *perishing* is somewhat dark and rugged, here is another word, *taking away*, which signifyeth very much to *qualifie* and *illustrate* it.

Calv. in loc.

The Hebrew word *קָטַף* hath a double Construction, both which are here made use of, namely to *gather*, and to *take away*.

S. 2. 2. 1.

Calvin reads it *Colliguntur* *mercifull men are gathered*. Death seemeth to be a *scattering*, and so a *perishing*.

ing, but indeed it is a *gathering*, when men *die*, especially good men, they are *gathered*. So that in this sense it is a great allay to the bitterness of the other word *perisheth*.

2. *Lapide* with others read *it auferantur*, with which our translation agreeth, are taken away, and no doubt it is the most genuine rendering of the word in this place, since this Hebrew word, where it signifieth to *gather*, is usually joyned with the *Preposition* signifying *to*, whereas here in the very next clause it is joyned with a *Preposition* signifying *from*, and therefore most fitly translated, *taken away*.

Lap. in loc.

And now that which the Prophet intends by this phrase, is to note two things,

1. In general, by *taking away*, is meant *dying*, *obitus*, *abitus*, death is often called a *going away*, a *departure*, and thus it mollifieth the former word, *perisheth*, letting us see that it is not an *extinction*, but only a *remotion*, an *abolition*, but an *ablation*; when we *die*, we do not *cease to be at all*, only we *change our place*, and are *taken away out of this world*.

2. More particularly, by *taking away* is meant a *violent death*, a *dying*, when in course of nature a man might have *lived long*; it is *one thing* for a *candle to go out of it self*, and *another to be blown out* by the *wind*; it is *one thing* for a *flower to wither*, and *another to be blasted*; it is *one thing* for a *tree to fall*, and *another to be plucked up by the roots*: Finally, it is *one thing* for a *man to go away*, and *another to be taken away from any place*; these are

Emblemes.

Emblemes of a natural, these of a violent death. In this notion this word addeth something to the former phrase, namely, the manner of the death, The righteous perisheth, and that not in a natural way, but is taken away by the hand of violence.

The result of what hath been said on this first general, amounts to these two things.

1. That righteous and mercifull men perish, and are taken away by death. Indeed it is said of Enoch, Heb. 11. 4. *God took him that he should not see death*, so was Elisha, and had God so pleased, he might have exempted all righteous men from death, but then neither his power in raising them to life, would have been so illustrious, nor their faith and hope in believing and expecting a Resurrection, so conspicuous, in which latter respect the Father saith well, that had good men been privileged from death, *Carni quidem felicitas adderetur, adimeretur autem fidei firmitudo*, though it might have been some kind of advantage to the frailty of our flesh, yet it would much have detracted from the strength of our faith: In great wisdom therefore hath God so ordered it, that righteous and mercifull men, as well as others, should walk through the valley of the shadow of death. Joh. 8. 51. 1. *Indeed our Saviours assertion is universall, He that keepeth my sayings shall not see death*, but he meaneth the second death, and so else where he explaineth himself, when he saith, *He that believeth in me shall not die for ever*. True it is, Solomon tells us, Prov. 10. 2. *that righteousness delivereth from death*, but it is from the evil, not from the being of death, death indeed

indeed is an *advantage* to a good man, yet still *he* *must*: But this is *not* all which the *Prophet* here *intends*, since this *perishing* and *taking away* by *death*, being that which is appointed for all, seemeth not to be a *matter* of much *lamentation*; And therefore that which no doubt is further aimed at in these *expressions*, is,

2. That sometimes *righteous* and *mercifull* men *perish*, and are *taken away* by a *violent death*. Indeed it is that which is *threatned* by *God* as a *curse* upon *wicked*, especially *bloud-thirsty* and *deceitfull* men; it is that which *Malefactors* are *sentenced* to by the *justice* of the *Judge*; but yet withall it is that which *may* and sometimes *doth* befall *Gods* own *servants*: nay which is more *strange*, and yet is many times *true*, the *righteous* are *taken away*, whilest the *wicked* remain. *Solomon* observed it in his time, *There is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness*, *Ecclef. 7. 15.* and there is a *wicked man* that *prolongeth his life in his wickedness*; yea which is yet most *sad*, but very *frequent*, the *righteous* *perish* by the *wicked*; and that for *righteousness* sake; and the *mercifull* are *taken away* by *cruell* hands, and that for *pieties* sake: *wicked* men never want *malice* in their hearts; and sometimes (through *divine permission*) have power in their hands to *take away* the *liberties*; *estates*, and *lives* of the *righteous*. One of the first good men that was in the world began this bitter *cup*, which many both *man of God* and other *godly* men have since *pledged*. It was the *complaint* of the *Church* in the *Old Testament*, and *St. Paul* taketh it up as most truly applicable to the *Church* of the *New*, *For the* *sake* *Psal. 44. 22.*

Rom. 8. 33.

take me are killed all the day long, and are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

This is that which the wise God suffers to come to to passe for many excellent ends.

That wicked men by such bloody acts, may fill up the measure of their sins, and thereby at once hasten and heighten their punishment.

That good men may have occasion of exercising and manifesting many graces particularly, the length of their patience, the height of their courage, and the depth of their charity.

When a man endureth to the end, suffering even death it self, patience hath its perfect work. That's a Resolution indeed which maketh a man faithfull to the death, and enableth him to look upon its pale visage with confidence. There cannot be greater charity then to forgive my enemy, especially when he persecuteth me to the death. So that when righteous men perish violently,

their graces flourish gloriously.

That hereby righteous men may be fully conformable to the righteous one, the Messiah, concerning whom this Prophet foretelleth that he should be cut off (as the tree is by the ax) from the land of the living. And in respect of which the Apostle chargeth those Jews, that by wicked hands they had taken and slain him.

Finally, That by so perishing, the Religion which they profess, may be honoured, and the God whom they serve, glorified. Since though both these are in some measure effected by doing well, and living uprightly, yet much more by suffering ill, and dying cheerfully in a righteous cause.

And

Isa. 53. 9.

And now what should the consideration hercof teach us, but

1. That certainly there is another world besides this, wherein a difference shall be put between the righteous and the wicked; between him that feareth God, and him that feareth him not. Here the righteous perish as well as the wicked; nay, the righteous perish, and the wicked prosper, and the mercifull are taken away by the wicked. But shall it be so alwayes? Will not the Judge of all the world do right? Will there not be a Reward for the righteous? Yes doubtless. And since in this world all things fall alike to all, and for the most part it fareth better with the wicked then the godly, it necessarily followeth that there is a state after death, wherein the righteous judgment of God in punishing the wicked, who now prosper, and recompensing the righteous, who now perish, shall be made manifest.

2. That it is a needfull prudence, in righteous and mercifull men, to improve their time and Talents in serving God, and doing good to others whilest they live. They must perish at last by a natural, they may be taken away soon by a violent death; and when they perish, all ability and opportunity will be taken away of doing good works, either of piety or pity, justice or mercy. Oh then, how great industry and celerity is needfull in putting forth themselves to the utmost for God, their souls, their Brethren whilest they live: that they may do much in a little time, according to that sage advice of the wise man, *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, for there is no work, nor device,* Eccles. 9. 10.

nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whether thou goest.

3. That sowing in righteousness, and reaping in mercy, they would not be discouraged from the apprehension of this perishing and taking away. I am afraid such thoughts as these do sometimes arise in the minds of men: How dieth the wise man even as the fool, the righteous as the wicked? Let me live never so well, I must perish: Nay, my conscientious walking may occasion my ruine. How much better is it to spend my daies in pleasure, and indulge to my lusts whilest I live, since I can but die at last? But far be such reasonings from wise and righteous men, especially when we consider how great a mercy the very perishing of the righteous, and taking away of the mercifull is; which will appear, if we proceed to the

2. Mitigation of the complaint, as it is expressed in the close of the verse, The righteous are taken away from the evil to come.

Quest.

There are (according to the known distinction of the Schooles) two sorts of evil, the one of sin, and the other of punishment; and it is true in reference to both.

Ans.

1. When righteous men die, they are taken away from the evil of sin, into which they are prone to fall, so long as they live. *Nusquam tuta est humana fragilitas*, saith St. Hierome, *Humane frailty is never safe.* In this world we are continually assaulted, and sometimes captivated; but death puts us out of all danger; we shall be tempted no longer, and sinne no more.

Hier. Ep. ad
EuRoeb.

2. But

2. But no doubt it is the *evil of punishment* which here the *Prophet* intends, and thus it may admit of a double notion.

1. They are taken away from those *ordinary personal evils*, to which they, with the rest of mankind, are subject in this world. The *best men* whilst they live here, are exposed to *aches, paines, sicknesses, losses, crosses*, manifold troubles and *miseries*: But when they die, all teares are wiped away from their eyes: Fears removed from their hearts: They rest from their labours, so *St. John*. They enter into peace, they rest in their beds, so our *Prophet* in the very next verse. Rev. 14. 16. Isa. 57. 2.

2. But that which is here *principally meant*, is, that the *righteous and mercifull* are taken away by death, from some *extraordinary and publique evil of Judgement*, which is to come upon the place where they live. Those words of the *Prophet*, Come my people, enter thou into thy chambers, shut thy doors about thee; hide thy self as it were for a little moment, while the indignation be overpast; are by some expounded of the chambers of the grave, in which God is pleased to hide his people, before he cometh forth of his place to punish the *Inhabitants of the world*. [Isa. 26. 20.]

Indeed, this is not alwaies the dispensation of *Divine Providence*. Sometimes the *righteous* are taken away in the common calamity, together with the wicked. The *fruitfull and barren trees* are blown down at once by the same wind of *Judgement*. Perhaps, good men, have by *sinfull compliances*, been involved in the *national guilt*, and no wonder if they are also involved in the *notional punishment*.

Sometimes the *righteous* are delivered from the com-

Pfal. 91. 4.

Ezck. 9. 4.

man misery, and yet not taken away by death. Whil-
 lest the whole world is overwhelmed with a deluge of wa-
 ters, Noah is preserved alive in the Ark. When So-
 dome is to be destroyed, Lot is sent to Zoar: And when
 Jerusalem is to be overthrowne, the godly are admoni-
 shed to go to Pella. That Promise in the Psalms, hath
 been sometimes literally and fully verified in a time of
 pestilential infection, *A thousand shall fall on thy right
 hand, and ten thousand on thy left, but it shall not come
 nigh thee.* God sets a mark upon the mourners, and the
 destroying Angel passeth by them as he did by the Is-
 raelites houses in Egypt.

And then sometimes the righteous are taken away by
 death, before the general desolation come. Thus God
 death with Josiah that good King, before the captivity
 of Israel: St. Austin (that godly Father) before
 the destruction of Hippo; and Luther that eminent Dr.
 before the devastation of Germany.

Before I go any further, it will not be amiss to take
 notice how this truth unfolds the riddle, and cleareth
 the seeming injustice of Divine Proceedings. We
 oftentimes see, and seeing, wonder; nay, perhaps repine
 at it, that good men are taken out of, whilst wicked
 men continue in this world. But surely this can be no
 just cause of casting any blemish upon Divine Dispensa-
 tions, when we consider that

On the one hand the wicked are preserved, but it is
 for the evil to come. They escape for a time, that some
 remarkable Judgment may fall upon them. As the
 wine told that wicked wretch, when sleeping under a
 rotten wall, it awaked him, and saved him from the
 ruin. *Quia dormis super sedes cupre et in cineribus tuis*
 ved

wed them from the wall, reserving thee for the wheels.

On the other hand, the righteous are indeed taken away, but it is from the evil to come. So that whilest the wicked mans preservation is a curse, the good mans perishing is a favour. God spareth the one in anger, and taketh away the other in mercy.

Indeed, Righteous men are taken away from the evil to come, upon a double account.

1. *Ne veniat*, That the evil which is to come upon the place may not come upon them: God will not have his righteous ones to be spectators of, nor sufferers in those ruines, which his justice hath decreed to inflict upon the wicked for their sinnes. This is rendered as the reason why that immature death befell Josiah who was slain in the battell that he might not see the evil which was coming.

2. *Ut veniat*, That the evil may come and be inflicted on the place: for (Beloved) you must know that whilest righteous men live, they are very prevalent with God by their prayers and tears to keep off judgement: *Unus homo plus valet orando, quam mille pugnando*, one righteous man can do more by prayer, then a thousand by armes. Let me alone saith God to Moses, *Exo. 32. 10.* that my wrath may wax hot against this people, *Fatetur se Moyses orationibus teneri*, so the glass: God seemeth to confess that his hands were as it were tied by Moses his Prayer, so that he could not punish that idolatrous people. I can do nothing (saith the Angel to Lot) *Gen. 19. 22.* whilest thou art here. Good men stand in the gap to turn away the wrath of God from the Nation where they live: and therefore when God is resolved, and the time prefixed is accomplished, that he will destroy a people,

people, he suffereth the wicked to fill up the measure of their sinnes, by killing his servants: or else he appoints some other meanes by which they are removed out of this world from the evil to come.

The Meditation of this truth affords matter of

I. Comfort to the righteous. *Or xxiixi dē arōm xxi*
 19, said the Greek Poet, Whom God loveth, he dyeth young. Certain it is, that when God cuts off any righteous ones betimes, or permits them to be cut off by their bloody enemies, though these do it in malice, he suffers it in love. For (tell me) is it not a mercy to be put into a safe harbour, before the stormy tempest arise?

To get into the House, before the thunder and lightning rain, and hail fall? This is Gods design in taking away his Servants, and therefore they have reason to bid death welcome. Indeed, the strongest consolation against death, is the consideration of the terminus ad quem, to what the righteous are taken, even that good, and blisse, and glory to come. They are taken to an

Hebr. 12. 22,

23.

immumerable company of Angels, or the spirits of the just men made perfect. They are taken to a Palace of Glory, a Paradise of Pleasure, and a Mansion of Eternity. Finally, they are taken to the Beatifical Vision of the face of God, and the full fruition of his glorious presence.

But withall it is comfortable to reflect on the terminus a quo, from what they are taken, from the evil, misery, and calamity to come, upon the place where, and people among whom they lived.

Terrour to the wicked. Nothing more usual with godly men, then to rejoyce when the righteous are taken away from among them. They had rather

have

have their *room* then their *company*, as being desirous to be rid of them. Hence it is, that they are not only glad of, but many times very active in taking away the *righteous*. They do not account themselves safe whilst the *godly* are among them. But oh what fools are they, and how grossly deceived! Rejoyce not against me, O mine enemy, saith the Church. So may every *Sonne* of the Church. Little cause have the wicked to rejoyce: Nay, instead of laughing they have more cause to weep, when the *righteous* are taken away. For if the *righteous* be taken away from, it must needs follow that their taking away, is a sign of evil to come. So that the death of the *godly*, is a sad Prognostick of the destruction of the wicked. What a wall is to a Town, an hedge to a Field, a pillar to an House, that is a *righteous* man to the place where he liveth. And therefore as men, when they intend to take the Town, batter the walls; to lay waste the Field, pluck up the hedge; to pull down the House, take away the pillar: So Almighty God, when he designeth to pluck up, to overthrow, and to pull down a Kingdom or a Nation, he first removeth his own Servants. Wicked men look upon the good, as thornes and pricks to offend them, whilst they have more cause to account them as Chariots and Horse-men to defend them. They think themselves most secure and happy, but indeed they are then nearest to misery and ruine, when the *godly* are taken from them. By taking away the *righteous*, they intend a courtesie to themselves, but it is in truth, as a courtesie to the good, so an injury to themselves: Though yet such is the blindness of their minds, they will not see, and the hardness of their hearts, that they will not consider it. Which leads me to the

Gen. 2d.

Other part of the text, the Complaint which the Prophet taketh up against the wicked in these words, No man layeth it to heart, none considering.

It might be here taken notice of in general, that the sin which the Prophet declaimeth against, is not positive but negative. Not the bloody taking away of righteous ones; not the cruel rejoicing at their fall, but the not laying it to heart. In deed, to be an Instrument of, or laugh at the calamity of the godly, making their tears our wine, their ruine our sport, is abominable. But though we be not in the seat of the scorers, yet if we be not in the posture of mourners, it is justly culpable. Thus Dives is charged by our blessed Saviour, not with oppressing Lazarus, by taking any thing from him, but not relieving him; in giving something to him. There are sins of omission as well as commission. There are breaches of the negative as well as of the affirmative Precepts. We sin as well (though not so much) in not doing the good required, as in doing the evil prohibited. Not only the wastfull Steward, but the unprofitable Servants, shall be cast out. The Vine that bringeth forth no grapes, shall be cut down as well as that which bringeth forth wild grapes. Those whom Christ will at the last day set at his left hand, are not accused with any evil or unjust acts they did, but only with neglect of those charitable acts they ought to have done. Oh, let us make conscience of not doing, as well as doing.

To let this go, the sinne in particular reproved, is, not laying it to heart; and considering the death of the righteous: Concerning which I shall briefly discover three things; the nature, the extent, and the guilt of it.

1. *The Nature of the sin*, what it is, will the better appear if we observe the *Emphasis* of the words; the one whereof considering, is an *act* of the *Judgment*, weighing things in the *ballance of Reason*: the other, *laying to heart*, refers to the *affections*. Since then any thing is *laid to heart*, when we are deeply affected with it. These do one infer the other; since what we affect, we take into *consideration*, and by *considering*, we come to be affected. Whilest I was musing, the fire kindled, saith David. The consideration of any object, causeth suitable affections; If *delightfull*, joy, if *hurtfull*, sorrow. The fault then here characterized, is, that though the *righteous* were taken away before their eyes, yet they did not *lay it* to their hearts. And though they could not but take notice, yet they would not consider it; at leastwise not so seriously and affectionately as they ought.

Psal. 39.3.

2. The *Extent* of this sin, will be the more evident, if we observe the several *Circumstances* by which it is aggravated.

1. It was not the death of any, but a *righteous man*; not of one, but of many *mercifull men*: and some of those, *men of God*, and yet it was not laid to heart.

2. These *righteous* and *mercifull ones*, did not die a *natural death*, but were taken away, when yet they might have lived (in course of nature) many yeares longer; and done a great deal of service for God in their Generation. And yet this was not laid to heart by them.

3. This taking away the *righteous* by death, did portend no lesse then *ruine and misery* to come, and that upon themselves: And yet they were so stupid as not to consider it.

Psal. 14. 1.

4. And which enlargeth the *Complaint*, their *fault* was *general*: *None considered, none laid to heart.* That is *very few*, as else-where; *There is none righteous.* By which phrase is intimated, though not a *nullity*, yet a *paucity*; not *one* of *many* were sensible of the *losse*, a *spiritual Lethargy* had seized upon the *most*, and the *disease* was become *Epidemical*.

3. The *Guilt* of this *sinne*, how *great* it is, will be *manifest* in a *three-fold* respect.

Psal. 26. 4.

1. In regard of *God*, it argueth want of *Piety*. *Almighty God* hath placed us in this *world*, as upon a *Theater*, that we might take notice of the various *passages* of his *Providence*. So that not to regard his *works* and consider the *operation* of his *hands*, cannot but *highly provoke* him. Indeed, they are *equally bad*, not to regard the *sounding* of his *word* in our *eares*, and not to *observe* the *appearances* of his *works* in our *eyes*. Among his many *Providential* works, none more *observable* then the *taking away* of the *mercifull*. For certainly, if a *sparrow* fall not to the *ground*, much less doth a *Saint*, without *Divine permission*. If the *hairs* of his *head* are *numbered*, surely his *head* cannot be *taken off*, without a *special Providence*. Indeed, the *perishing* of a *righteous man*, is a *work* at once, both of *Gods mercy* and *Judgment*. *Mercy* to him, *Judgment* to the *wicked*. And not to consider such a *work*, so as to lay it to heart, must needs be a *great sin* against him.

Job 6. 14.

2. In regard of the *righteous*, it argueth want of *pitty*. To him that is *afflicted* (saith *Job*) *pitty* should be *showed* from a *friend*; And especially to him that is *persecuted* to the *death*. We may observe among *beasts*,

beasts, (even swine) a sympathy; so that when one is killed, the rest are troubled: And shall there not be among men? *Didicimus cum homines simus alienis calamitatibus moveri*, nothing more humane, then to be moved with compassion towards them that are under sufferings. So that it is not only impiety, but inhumanity.

3. In regard of the persons themselves, it argueth want of wisdom. When the righteous perish, and mercifull men are taken away, it is a losse to them who remain. They loose the light of their good Example, the benefit of their Prayers. And should not this be considered? Nay, it is not only a losse, but (as hath been already expressed) it is a dolefull presage of ruine: And shall it not be laid to heart? So that it argueth a senseless stupidity not to consider what is so much our own concernment. By all which it appeareth an impious, an inhumane, and unnatural sinne which our Prophet bemoaneth, when he saith, *The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart, and mercifull men are taken away, none considering that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come.*

Oh then, be we all exhorted to the contrary duty. Solomon the wise, seemeth to promise himself, that when the living are in the house of mourning, they will lay it to heart. And if we ought to lay so heart the death of any, much more of righteous men: and especially, when either *Josiah the King*, or *Eliab the Prophet*, or *Zacharias the Priest*, are taken from us. Though the Sun is not much observed by us whilst it shineth, yet if it be in an Eclipse, who doth not take notice of it: Oh, let not the Eclipse, and much

lesse the *seeing* of any of Gods *eminent* servants passe by *unregarded*! Let us then consider and lay to heart the death of the *righteous*;

1. *Recordando*, by keeping a Register of the death of the *Godly* in all ages, but chiefly in the age wherein we live; both as to the *quality* of the *Persons*, and the manner of their death.

2. *Lamentando*, by bewailing their removall from us: Not in respect of *them*, to whom death is a favour, but in regard of our *selves*, who may in their departure, sadly foretell approaching misery.

3. *Imitando*, by following the good example both of their life and death, so far as we are called to it. By which means, *their* death will not only be *their* gain, but *ours*.

4. *Preparando*, by fitting our selves for that evil which their death foretells, that whilest the *simple* passe on and are punished, we may like prudent men foresee the evil, and hide our selves: or rather God may hide us, either by preserving us in it, or by taking us away (as he hath other of his servants) before the vengeance come.

And now (*Beloved*) least I and you should be guilty of the sinne, against which my text declaimeth, give me leave in a few words to put you in mind of the death of that *righteous* and *mercifull* man of God, who hath been lately taken from us.

Titles, which I hope none will envy him, since if we look no further then his death, we shall find just occasion of applying them to him. As for the cause of his death, it concerneth not me to meddle with it; I shall leave the censure of it to that day, when all the Judg-

ment

Prov. 22. 3.

Dr John Hewit
who died June
8. and was
buried in the
Church of St.
Gregories the
10th day of
that month.

ment of men shall be scanned over. But I trust none will be offended, if I take notice of the manner of his death; *The righteous* (saith Solomon) *is as bold as a* Prov. 28. 1.
Lion. And again, *The righteous hath hope in his death.* 14. 32.
 And surely, it was the confidence of a well led life, that made him so meekly bold, humbly confident at his death; the righteousness of his way, which filled him with cheerfulness at his end. Of all acts of mercy, none greater then the remitting injuries, and forgiving enemies: and how great a measure he had of this grace, those charitable lines which were read at his Funerall, and the sweet words he uttered on the Scaffold, abundantly testify. I want both time and tongue, to give you a Narrative of his life, which was a constellation of many bright Stars; many excellent Graces which were obvious to all that knew him throughout the whole course of his conversation. This righteous and merciful man is now perished from the earth, and taken away from us; But so, as that I have good reason to believe, he is removed to that place of bliss, where he enjoyeth the society of Saints and Angels; yea, of God himself.

And now (*Beloved*) let it not be said, *Out of sight out of mind.* We can no longer enjoy him, but (I hope) we shall not forget him; especially not you (*my Brethren*) among whom he hath spent his paines, and exhausted his strength, to do your souls Good.

Do you (*I beseech you*) consider and remember how often you have beheld him in this holy Mount: how many wholesome Reproofs, Counsels, and Comforts you have heard from him, and withall reflect upon your own unthankfulness for, unprofitableness under
 his

kin and the labours of others of Gods faithfull Servants among you. Finally, do you, and let us all seriously lay to heart what a sad presage the death of this good man is of ruine and destruction, whilst me thinketh he saith to us this day in the words of his Saviour, Weep not for me (I am taken away from the evil to come.) but weep for your selves, upon whom evil is likely to come, unless by your reall and speedy repentance you prevent it. And now I am come to the end of my Sermon, and that which was my end in Preaching it, to stirre up both my self and you to consider the death of this Righteous man: not so, as to be embittered against the Instrument by whom it hath been effected, but against our selves for our sinnes which have procured it, that this dolefull losse may be an occasion of our sorrowfull Repentance, and that Repentance may prevail with God to avert those Judgements which hang over us, to continue his faithfull Labourers among us, and restore his ancient blessings to us; which God grant for his mercies sake in Jesus Christ. Amen.

FIN IS.